

Human Rights Violations Through Honour Killings: An Analytical Study of Women's Experiences in Marathwada

Megha B. Salunke¹, Dr. Anilkumar²

¹*Department of Law, Shri Jagdishprasad Jhabarmal Tibrewala University, Vidyanagari, Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan – 333001*

²*Department of Law, Assistant Professor, Shri Jagdishprasad Jhabarmal Tibrewala University Vidyanagari, Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan – 333001*

Abstract- The God of small things reflect not only crime against women about rape, domestic violence, molestation and Dalit agendas but also the social paroxysm about honor killing. Honour killing is essentially the intentional, premeditated death of a woman, generally at the request of family members, who believe she has brought dishonour to the family. Thus, “honor killing is called a customary killing can be said as the murder of a family or social group by other members, due to the belief of the perpetrators that the victim has brought dishonor upon the family or community”. In what seems to be a startling instance of honour killing, a 23-year-old third-year medical student was reportedly burned to death in 2 Nanded in the Marathwada area of Maharashtra. “In a macabre case of ‘honor killing’ the 7 Maharashtra Police have arrested an 18-year-old youth and his mother for allegedly hacking off his elder sister’s head with a sickle, clicking selfies and sharing them in groups, officials said in Aurangabad”. Honor Killings were on rise in Maharashtra too, activist claimed here today.” We associate honor killings with the states such as Hariyana, Punjab, Uttarpradesh and Bihar due to the dominance of khap panchayat over there, but in Maharashtra too incidents of honor killing have been increasing”, said journalist Jatin Desai.

Keywords: Extramarital relations, hate, homicide, violence, social status, transgression

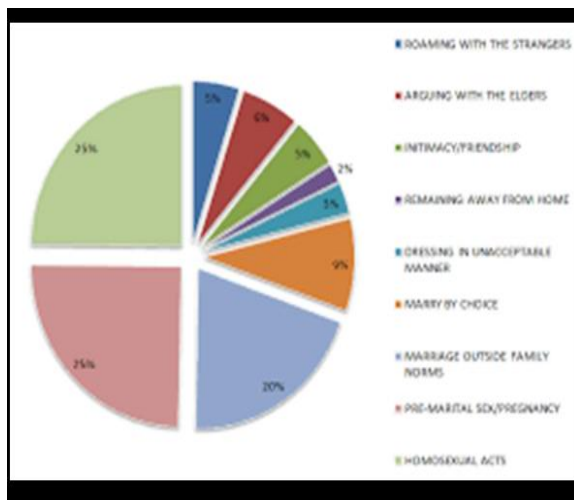
I.INTRODUCTION

In the shadowy realms of deeply ingrained cultural norms and societal values, honour killings emerge as a chilling testament to the fragility of human rights, particularly for women [1]. These acts of violence, often concealed under the guise of preserving family honour, constitute a blatant violation of the principles of justice, equality, and human dignity. This research embarks on an extensive analysis of honour killings

within the distinctive socio-cultural milieu of the Marathwada region, exploring the intricate web of historical, cultural, and socio-economic actors that contribute to the perpetuation of this form of violence [2]. As we navigate through the complexities of this pervasive issue, the objective is not only to unravel the underlying dynamics but also to advocate for the protection and empowerment of women as an indispensable facet of human rights [3]. Honour killings, colloquially referred to as 'izzat' or 'izzat lutna', manifest as acts of brutality inflicted within families or communities to reclaim perceived honour, often in response to relationships or marriages deemed incompatible with prevailing societal norms [4]. The impact of such violence is disproportionately borne by women who, ensnared in the intricate web of familial expectations and traditional codes of conduct, find themselves at the nexus of archaic customs and contemporary influences. It is within this complex tapestry of tradition and modernity that the Marathwada region, comprising eight districts in the state of Maharashtra, provides a compelling backdrop for our study [5]. To truly grasp the roots of honour killings in Marathwada, a journey into the historical underpinnings becomes imperative. The feudal past, caste-based stratification, and rigid community structures have collectively shaped a societal landscape where notions of honour are deeply intertwined with familial reputation. As we delve into the annals of history, our objective is to trace the trajectory of honour killings, understanding how historical legacies continue to influence contemporary attitudes and actions. The intricate interaction of cultural expectations and gender conventions that dictate strict roles for men and women is at the core of honour murders [6]. Women who defy these norms,

particularly in matters of love, marriage, or personal autonomy, find themselves marked as transgressors [7]. This research endeavors to dissect the intricate web of expectations placed on women, exploring the intersections of caste, religion, and socio-economic factors that contribute to their vulnerability in the face of honor-based violence [8]. Examining the legal and institutional responses to honor killings in Marathwada unveils a critical dimension of our analysis [9]. While legislative interventions have been implemented to curb such violence, the gap between legal provisions and their effective implementation persists [1]. This study scrutinizes the enforcement mechanisms, highlighting challenges and opportunities for improving the legal and institution all and scape to protect individuals at risk [10].

Honor killing: Socio legal Analysis with special reference



“As per report of Ministry of State in the ministry of home affairs (Shri Nityanand Rai) National Crime Records Bureau published data on murders in its annual publication crime in India”. The reports were available till the year 2021 [11]. The State and union territories wise details of cases registered and reported, crime rate under murder in the year 2017-2021 are at annexure-I. The State and Union Territories wise details of cases registered under intention of murder for communal and religious and Honour killing during the year 2017-2021 are at annexure-II. The data clears picture a declining trend of crime rate in the year 2021 as compared to year 2017

Intention for Honour Killing in Maharashtra

The death of a family member typically a woman who is seen to have caused disgrace or dishonour to the family is known as honour killing [12]. In India, caste-based conventions, patriarchal attitudes, and sociocultural factors all play a significant role in the motivation for honour murders [8]. Here's a thorough examination:

1. Protection of Family Honour

The main goal is to preserve or restore the family's or community's so-called izzat (honour). Actions such as marrying outside one's caste or religion, choosing one's partner without family approval, or even dressing "immodestly" can be seen as bringing dishonour.

2. Control Over Female Autonomy

Honour killings are often used as a tool to control women's sexuality and freedom. Women exercising agency—choosing whom to marry, rejecting arranged marriages, or asserting independence—may be seen as defying male authority [13].

3. Caste and Community Preservation

Inter-caste and inter-religious marriages are still socially taboo in many parts of India. Honour killings are intended to "punish" individuals for crossing caste or religious boundaries and to set an example to others [14].

4. Patriarchal Social Order

Honour killings are a means to reinforce patriarchal control, where men in the family (father, brother, uncle) often act as the enforcers of traditional roles. The act is often rationalized as a necessity to maintain societal norms.

5. Pressure from Khap Panchayats and Community

In rural North India, Khap Panchayats (caste-based village councils) may order or condone honour killings. The intention here is not only personal but also social: to maintain rigid codes of conduct enforced by the community.

Legal and Moral Context

Honour killings are not legally sanctioned in India and are treated as criminal acts of murder.

The Supreme Court of India has declared that such killings "fall under the rarest of rare cases" and can be punishable by the death penalty. The intention, therefore, though culturally rooted, is illegal and condemned in modern legal and moral frameworks.

Punishment under IPC (Indian Penal Code)

Actual Penalties under Indian Penal Code:

- Sections 299–304: “Penalises any person guilty of murder and culpable homicide not amounting to murder. Murder penalty is life imprisonment or death, and fine. The penalty for non-murder culpable homicide is life imprisonment or imprisonment for up to 10 years, and fine”.
- Section 307: “Penalises threaten to kill for up to 10 years of imprisonment, and a fine. If a person gets injured, the punishment can extend to life in prison”.
- Section 308: “Penalises attempt to commit culpable homicide by imprisonment for up to 3 years or with fine or with both. If it causes injury, the person shall be imprisoned or fined for up to 7 years, or both”.
- Section 120A and 120B: “Penalize whoever is a participant to a criminal conspiracy”.
- Sections 107–116: “Penalizes people for abetting murders, including murder and culpable homicide”.
- Section 34 and 35: “Penalizes several-person criminal acts in support of common intention.”

II. TYPES OF HONOR KILLING

- 1) Victims of Rape
- 2) Homosexuality
- 3) Forbidden male partners
- 4) Interfaith and Outside Caste Relation or Marriage
- 5) Seeking a divorce
- 6) Refusal of Arranged or Forced Marriage

These are types of honor killing practices carried on by society

1] Victim of Rape

In Society there among many culture, victims of raped women faces severe violation. Specially in India and Pakistan women who have raped considered by society as ‘dishonor’ or ‘disgrace’ to their families. Sometimes women are victim of gang rape and became pregnant, and faces condemned by society. Women’s virginity is a code of society for the honor which must be preserved until marriage. Suzzane Ruggi writes, “A women’s virginity is the property of the men around her, first her father, later a gift for her husband; a virtual dowry as she graduates to marriage.”

2] Homosexuality

Honour killing by family members is also a result of homosexuality. Manoj, who was born with a female sex record, almost died when he informed his family

that he felt like a guy and loved a woman. His parents beat him up in a corner of the home, bound his wrists and feet, and refused to acknowledge him. His father threatened to murder him. He said as he imagined, “I had thought whatever be my truth, I would be accepted, after all this was my family. But my parents were ready to kill me for their honor.”

3] Forbidden Male Partners

In this type of honor killing the male members of her family will often beat and murder the offender to restore the women’s lost honor. Reason behind the honor is modesty and virginity of women and if a man disrupts her virginity bisexual intercourse then women lost her virginity.

4] Interfaith and Outside Caste Relation or Marriage
Indians have a traditional way of thinking. Marriage outside of their caste, society, and religion was unthinkable to them. The same caste and community should marry. Anyone who dares to marry outside their caste would suffer from violence, societal and familial boycotts, and even honour killings.

5] Seeking a Divorce

A women seek a divorce from her husband sometimes it may cause disrespects or insults her husband. Sometimes husband wife’s relationship is not in social way and this type of confidentiality disclose in society its type of public dishonor and women trigger for honor killing.

6] Refusal of Arranged or Forced Marriage

There are such cases in society that family had prior decided marriage but the girl is already engaged with another man but this fact is unknown for family and afterwards marriage which is forced he bride may eloped with her lover and cause of action of family in honor killing.

7] Live in Relationship recent trend

Nowadays, such type of relationships one of cause for honor killing. Indian society is completely under influence of traditional and religious thoughts so they have not such type of psychology to accept new trends and challenges of society so there many such incidents of honor killing have taken place because of live in relationship.

Indian Constitution and Honor Killing

“Art-21: Right to Life and Personal Liberty It gives an individual to marry a person of his choice, people of society who stunned with orthodox think in does not

give permission to play in determining our choice of partners.”

Its direction given by Supreme Court in the case of “Shafin Johan V. Asokan K.M” (2018) this case is also known as Hadiya case.

Under Art 32 petition was filed by Shakti Vahini NGO and the Court issued some guidelines on how to prevent Honor Killings has observed that

“Honor killing kills individual liberty, freedom of choice and one’s own perception of choice”.

In the case of Bhagwan Das case judgment (2011) Honor killing come under rarest of rare and deserve penalty. In the case of Laxmibai Chandargi B Vs State of Karnatka (2021) SC gave guidelines and directed police officials to undergo training and deal sensitively such matters

Main Causes Behind This Evil

- Patriarchal Mindset
- Morality varies from society to society
- Social institutions like community panchayats etc. create social pressure
- Lack of exposure to the world .

Opinion of Chief Justice About Honor Killing, “Hundreds of Young People die in India due to honor killing merely because they love someone or married outside caste or against will of family”. The Chief Justice of India said that morality is a subjective term that varies from person to person. He quoted an article that described the 1991 murder of a 15-year-old girl in Uttar Pradesh by her parents. “The Article focused upon that villagers welcomed the crime. Their actions were approved and justified (for them) because they behaved accordingly with that type of traditions in which they bring brought up of that society in which they lived. However, is this type of behaviour that would have been put forward by rational people ? If this is not code of conducted way of society that would have been put forward by vindicated people? Many more people are murdered each year for love relationship or intercaste marriages and against will of family.”

- “Morality is often dictated by dominants groups. Who decides the code of conduct or morality ? The dominant groups, which overpower the weaker ones”. The social hierarchy places the most vulnerable groups at the bottom, and even if their agreement is obtained, it is an illusion.

• “Members from the marginalized communities have to submit to the dominant culture for their own survival” Vulnerable sections of society are unable to generate a counter culture because of humiliation and separation at the hands of oppressor groups. The counter culture, if any, that the vulnerable group develop, is overpowered by the government groups to further alienate them, while referring to the negotiation of morality due to power of difference.” CJI said.

- According to him, the Indian Constitution was created for people as they should be, not as they were. “It is the flag bearer of our fundamental rights. It guides us in our daily life”.

Case laws of Honour killing in Marathwada region and Judgement of High court

A July 18, 2019 ruling by a Sessions Court in Nanded district that sentenced Bhokar resident Digamber Dasre, 29, to death and his cousin Mohan Dasre, to life in prison for slitting the throats of his married sister and her lover, with whom she had eloped and married him who was out of cast, was upheld by the Bombay High Court bench in Sambhaji Nagar (Aurangabad). "It is time to eradicate the barbaric and feudal practice of honour killing, which is a disgrace to our country," the panel said. The judges went on to say, "This is required as a deterrent for such outrageous, uncivilised behaviour." While noting that "Honour Killings, for whatever reasons, come within the category of rarest of rare cases, and as such deserving of death punishment," it cited a Supreme Court decision. In what seems to be a startling instance of honour killing, a 23-year-old third-year medical student was reportedly burned to death in Nanded, in the Marathwada area of Maharashtra. In Nanded, Maharashtra, a medical student was strangled and burned alive in an honour killing. The event was reported from Limbgaon, which is around an hour's drive from Nanded city in the Pimpri Mahipal district. In what seems to be a startling instance of honour killing, a 23-year-old third-year medical student was reportedly burned to death in Nanded, in the Marathwada area of Maharashtra. The issue has also been given careful consideration by the Maharashtra State Commission for Women. "What transpired is a startling and cruel conduct. MSC Chairperson Rupali Chakankar said, "We have requested that the police take stringent action."

REFERENCE

- [1] D. Singh and D. S. Bhandari, "Legacy of Honor and Violence: An Analysis of Factors Responsible for Honor Killings in Afghanistan, Canada, India, and Pakistan as Discussed in Selected Documentaries on Real Cases," *Sage Open*, vol. 11, no. 2, p. 21582440211022323, Apr. 2021, doi: 10.1177/21582440211022323.
- [2] O. Aksoy and A. Szekely, "Making Sense of Honor Killings," *Am. Sociol. Rev.*, vol. 90, no. 3, pp. 427–454, Jun. 2025, doi: 10.1177/00031224251324504.
- [3] K. Patwardhan, "When Honour Overrides Justice: The Evidence Act's Role In Honour Killings In India," *Educ. Adm. Theory Pract.*, pp. 5386–5391, Jan. 2024, doi: 10.53555/kuey.v30i1.8967.
- [4] S. M. AlQahtani, D. S. Almutairi, E. A. BinAqeel, R. A. Almutairi, R. D. Al-Qahtani, and R. G. Menezes, "Honor Killings in the Eastern Mediterranean Region: A Narrative Review," *Healthcare*, vol. 11, no. 1, p. 74, Dec. 2022, doi: 10.3390/healthcare11010074.
- [5] E. Mundhe, "The Infinite Path Research Across Disciplines," Jan. 01, 2025, *Zenodo*. doi: 10.5281/ZENODO.14583762.
- [6] A. K. Gill, N. Begikhani, and G. Hague, "'Honour'-based violence in Kurdish communities," *Womens Stud. Int. Forum*, vol. 35, no. 2, pp. 75–85, Mar. 2012, doi: 10.1016/j.wsif.2012.02.001.
- [7] K. R. Manoharan, "Radical freedom: Periyar and women," *Open Res. Eur.*, vol. 1, p. 6, Mar. 2021, doi: 10.12688/openreseurope.13131.1.
- [8] A. Anand, "Unheard and Unnoticed: Violence Against Women in India – A Study of Practice of Witch-Hunting, Honour Killing and Devadasi System," p. 1927932 B, 238 pages, 2022, doi: 10.17635/LANCASTER/THESIS/1606.
- [9] A. Sahu, "Honour Killing in India: A Critical Study," vol. 6.
- [10] C. W. Green, "Bad girls in corsets: Women and the transgressive body in the nineteenth century".
- [11] S. Iwakabe, "Loving in Secret, Grieving in Silence: Emotion-Focused Therapy With the Other Woman After an Affair in a Japanese Cultural Context," *J. Clin. Psychol.*, p. jclp.70045, Sep. 2025, doi: 10.1002/jclp.70045.
- [12] A. Bhatia, M. Lokot, L. Kenny, M. Mathpati, and B. Cislighi, "Honor, violence, and children: A systematic scoping review of global evidence," *Child Abuse Negl.*, vol. 151, p. 106642, May 2024, doi: 10.1016/j.chiabu.2024.106642.
- [13] L. Bates, "Honor-Based Abuse in England and Wales: Who Does What to Whom?," *Violence Women*, vol. 27, no. 10, pp. 1774–1795, Aug. 2021, doi: 10.1177/1077801220952168.
- [14] M. M. Idriss, "Abused by the Patriarchy: Male Victims, Masculinity, 'Honor'-Based Abuse and Forced Marriages," *J. Interpers. Violence*, vol. 37, no. 13–14, pp. NP11905–NP11932, Jul. 2022, doi: 10.1177/0886260521997928.